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# EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT FOR TANF PARTICIPANTS



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## **Request for Applications (RFA): Guidance and Requirements**

**SUB-GRANT NUMBER GBEN-05-02**

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# AGENDA

- RFA Introduction
  - Program Overview and Requirements
  - Application Preparation and Submission Instructions
  - Process of Review and Criteria for Award
  - Agreement, Method of Payment, Reporting Requirements
  - Proposal Template
  - Questions and Answers (throughout)
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# Introduction

- Purpose
  - Funding Available and Sub-grant Period
  - Eligible Applicants
  - Application Process
  - Technical Assistance and Additional Information
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# RFA Introduction: Purpose

- Solicit proposals for **proven** service approaches and strategies that promote employment success of current and former TANF clients, including those with multiple barriers.
  - Provide resources to expand and enhance existing service delivery efforts to address more fully the needs of this population prior to entry into work and during employment.
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# Purpose

- Expected outcomes are:
    - ❑ improved job placement
    - ❑ improved job retention
    - ❑ higher entered employment wages, and
    - ❑ increased wage gains and job advancement
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# Priority Areas

- Establish continuum and array of services statewide, including specialized employment services to
    - Better serve TANF clients and
    - Support job entry and continued employment.
  - Offer range and depth in assessment and services that help enhance Virginia's implementation of the Americans for Disability Act (ADA) within service system.
  - Provide services necessary to improve job retention and wage/job advancement.
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## Priority Areas (cont'd)

- Emphasis should be on developing and implementing services that
    - ❑ Can be sustained without grant funding and
    - ❑ Expand service infrastructure.
  - Consideration should be given to purchase of service models using
    - ❑ pay-for-performance and/or
    - ❑ per service unit/person rate
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# Proposals may include:

- Comprehensive assessments (use of psychologists and clinicians)
  - Services that stabilize an individual's situation for employment and/or obtaining alternative financial resources (e.g., Supplemental Security Income)
  - Intensive work preparation or work adjustment services, including education and skills training, CWEP, and OJT
  - Job development and placement services, including sectoral initiatives, subsidized employment, development of industry-based career ladders
  - Other services supporting job retention, higher wages, health benefits, and/or jobs with a career path.
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# Introduction: Funding Available

- \$11.5 million
  - Awards will be made for an 18-month period, effective 12/1/04 to 5/30/06, spanning FY 2005 and FY 2006.
  - Awards may be renewed for up to two years thereafter.
  - Note guidance specified for the Competitive Sub-grant program language in the 2004 Appropriation Act [page 292, Item 365(2)].
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# Funding Available: GA Guidance

- Grant program will be used to provide services *to engage present and former TANF recipients in activities to achieve and maintain self sufficiency. The grants shall comply with federal TANF laws and regulations. The grant program shall use criteria that will ensure grants are awarded statewide and to organizations that have a proven record of effectively delivering services and leveraging private and public sector dollars to carry out activities.*
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# Introduction: Eligible Applicants

- Local departments of social services
  - Incorporated nonprofit and for-profit organizations
  - State agencies
  - Local government entities in Virginia
  - Educational institutions
  - Faith-based organizations
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# Introduction: Application Process

- Applicant can submit only one proposal, but can partner with others
  - Proposal may involve multiple partners and vendors
  - Following type of submissions strongly encouraged wherever feasible for services and economies of scale:
    - Group proposal and/or
    - Expansion of an existing program
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# Application Process (cont'd)

- If multiple organizations are involved, a lead agent and a fiscal agent need to be identified.
  - Partner local department of social services (LDSS) can be fiscal agent, with additional document to sign after award.
  - Applicants who have previously received funds from VDSS must be in good standing to be considered.
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# Application Process (cont'd)

- Use TANF Proposal Template on [www.dss.state.va.us](http://www.dss.state.va.us)
  - Submit an Intent to Apply Email/Fax/letter by September 13, 2004
  - Submit the application no later than 5:00 pm, Thursday, October 7, 2004
    - ❑ 3 completed applications with original signatures
    - ❑ 1 copy
    - ❑ An electronic version
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# Introduction: Technical Assistance

- Direct additional questions on RFA to [tanf.grant@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:tanf.grant@dss.virginia.gov)
  - You may also contact directly:
    - Barbara Cotter (804.726.7910)
    - Faye Palmer (804.726.7938)
    - Deanie Powell, back-up, (804.726.7940)
  - Summaries of questions and answers and any revision posted weekly on website.
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# Program Overview And Requirements

- TANF Populations Eligible to Receive Services
  - Geographic Coverage
  - TANF Policy Waiver
  - Background Information
  - Services Requested
  - Expected Outcomes
  - Community Partnerships
  - Use of Funds and Match
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# TANF Populations Eligible to Receive Services

- In VIEW, including sanctioned.
- Exempted from VIEW (VIEW-Exempt)
- Recipient of diversionary assistance under TANF program
- Former recipients and now in Transitional period, up to 24 months after end of TANF cash assistance.
- Proposals may:
  - Serve TANF clients in a specific status or all statuses.
  - Target one or more specific populations defined by other characteristics

# Geographic Coverage

- Statewide coverage is an important consideration to
  - Increase services available for TANF clients and
  - Support enhanced efforts to meet ADA requirements.
- Cover as many jurisdictions as feasible for statewide services and economies of scale.
- Order of priorities where feasible:
  - Statewide
  - Regional or district-wide and
  - Individual locality.
- VDSS intends to achieve regional balance in new services funded, to the extent feasible.

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# TANF Policy Waiver

- Applicants may propose to request to waive state TANF program regulations for the proposed services.
  - Waiver must be identified and justified in the proposal narrative.
  - Documentation should show support of all affected LDSSs.
  - See Appendix B for waiver policy.
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# Background Information: TANF Clients

- TANF population is diverse within and across localities.
- Some can move readily into workforce.
- Some face only one or two issues impeding employment; others face 6 – 10. Individuals with significant issues often need stabilization services before work entry and after employed.
- GAO estimated nationally incidence of impairments in TANF population at over 40 percent.
- DRS' services revealed presence of many different disabilities in this population, with many determined most significant and with other issues.

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# TANF Clients (cont'd)

- Personal issues may include:
    - ❑ Learning Disabilities
    - ❑ Substance Abuse
    - ❑ Mental Illness
    - ❑ Mental Retardation
    - ❑ Low Educational Levels
    - ❑ Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder
    - ❑ Medical (Physical) Problems
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# TANF Clients (cont'd)

- Family or situational issues
    - ❑ Social Issues
    - ❑ Domestic Violence
    - ❑ Family Issues
    - ❑ Limited English Proficiency
    - ❑ Transportation
  - Research has shown a correlation between education and earnings
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# Background: ADA Guidance

- Guidance from HHS, Office for Civil Rights, clarifies responsibility of TANF programs to comport with Title II of ADA of 1990.
  - TANF recipients with 'hidden' disabilities (including those with temporary medical exemptions or partial disabilities) have often not been able to secure and retain employment.
  - Need appropriate screening, assessment and diagnostic work, and services.
  - Expansion of these services across the state will help more TANF adults with disabilities obtain and retain employment.
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# Background: Retention & Advancement

- Need better employment histories, increase in quality of jobs over time through higher wages, better benefit packages and greater job security.
  - Retention and advancement concerns should be addressed during preparation for entry into the workplace as well as post-placement.
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# Retention & Advancement (cont'd)

- Retention and advancement strategies apply to:
    - ❑ Individuals who face special issues and need extra preparation and support before entering the workforce,
    - ❑ Those who find jobs,
    - ❑ Those who have difficulty keeping jobs, and
    - ❑ Those who can find only entry level, low wage or part-time employment.
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# Services Requested

- Proposals may offer a single or array of services, using one or more providers.
    - Services purchased per individual
    - New staff (with justification)
  - Overall, looking for range of services from one or more proposals to enhance services for TANF clients that are responsive to their diverse needs.
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# Services Requested in Proposal

- One proposal could include multiple providers for same area.
  - Two or more could cover a similar/overlapping geographic area.
  - Each could include one or more providers in their respective applications.
  - Different service proposals could be complementary.
  - Complement, enhance and/or be integrated with existing VIEW services, not supplant or duplicate current services.
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# Services Requested

- Proposals to include one or more of 24 services listed on pages 10 and 11 of RFA.
  - Some to be performed by certified or licensed entities or individuals.
  - Other services may be included if confirmed with VDSS.
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# Expected Outcomes

- Number of VIEW participants who obtain employment
  - Increased hours of employment such as from part-time to full-time
  - Increased number of clients who exit the TANF program due to employment
  - Increased average hourly wage of clients
  - Increased rate of job retention – 90 days and 180 days and one year
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# Expected Outcomes (cont'd)

- Advancement in employment
  - Obtaining jobs with health insurance and/or other benefits
  - Obtaining Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI)
  - Obtaining a GED
  - Completion of treatment or milestone points
  - Other, to be defined by applicants.
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# Community Partnerships

- Multiple providers allow
    - Array of services
    - Essential expertise
  - Clients benefit greatly from integrated case planning and service delivery
  - Proposals should include
    - Documentation of partnerships
    - Definition of responsibilities
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# Community Partnerships: LDSS Links

- Document key interactions with LDSSs:
    - ❑ Integration with local VIEW plans and other TANF initiatives
    - ❑ Expansion of the continuum of services
    - ❑ Use of a TANF policy waiver
    - ❑ Process to identify and refer TANF participants
    - ❑ Case planning and case management
    - ❑ Case monitoring or follow-up
    - ❑ Reporting of status and outcomes information system
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# Use of Funds and Match

- Match expands available resources by leveraging grant funds
  - Match is optional but highly encouraged
  - Higher points for those with matching (non-state, non-federal)
  - Identify all funds used: sub-grant, other federal, VDSS funds, other state government, local government, foundation, private, and funds generated by the initiative.
  - Proposals related to medical services, consider portion of cost covered by TANF clients' Medicaid
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# Application Instructions: Content

- Use of Proposal Template
  - Sub-grant Application Cover Sheet  
***(signature required)***
  - Table of Contents *(with pages noted)*
  - Key Project Contacts and Fiscal Lead Agency
  - Certification of Compliance with General Sub-grant Conditions and Assurances  
***(signature required)***
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# Application Instructions: Content

- Federal Assurances Form SF-424B  
***(signature required)***
  - Proposal Summary (one page)
  - Proposal Narrative (up to 15 pages)
  - Implementation (up to 3 pages)
  - Budget (up to 7 pages)
  - Applicable Attachments
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# Application Instructions: Content

- Proposal Narrative (up to 15 pages)
    - ❑ Needs Assessment
    - ❑ Proposed Approach
    - ❑ Population to be Served
    - ❑ Outcomes (Employment and Employment-related)
    - ❑ Organizational, Staff, and Provider Qualifications
    - ❑ Collaborative Agreements
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# Application Instructions: Content

- Budget (up to 7 pages)
  - Personnel Costs
  - Full Budget
- Justification Narrative

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# Application Instructions: Content

- Applicable Attachments – vary by proposal and # partners
  - Position descriptions for positions to be funded through the RFA
  - Data for participating localities possibly related to:
    - Needs Assessment,
    - Projected Participants and
    - Outcomes
  - References
  - Interagency Agreements/Documents relevant to the application
  - Community Partners and Documentation of Support  
**(*signatures required*)**
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# Application

- See the TANF Proposal Template
  - Specific instructions on completing forms
  - Requested information highlighted
  - Guidance in italics can be deleted
- 3 copies, each with original signatures in yellow 2-pocket folder
- One copy in a green 2-pocket folder, with clips but no staples
- One electronic version (signatures not needed on electronic version)
- Format requirements (fonts, etc.)
- One set of exhibits (optional)

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# Review For Award

- One or more Evaluation Committees to evaluate proposals
    - VDSS staff and LDSS representatives
    - State agencies
    - Private providers and
    - Others knowledgeable about best practices
  - Process may involve and/or consider:
    - Additional subject-matter experts
    - Technical assistance from any source
    - Information from references and
    - Prior contractual work with VDSS
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# Criteria For Award

- Proposal Need Statement 15 points
  - Quality of Program Design/Proposed Services and Implementation Plan 25 points
  - Outcomes and Benefits Expected 25 points
  - Organizational, Staff and Provider Qualifications 20 points
  - Cost of Services and Match 15 points
  - Bonus Points (cash match) 5 points
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# Award Process

- Competitive process, with awards given to organizations with best proposal based on review.
  - Negotiations may be conducted and include request for more information and/or modification of proposal.
  - In the final set of awards, consideration will be given to apportionment of funds to ensure some coverage across the state.
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# Awards

- The Department reserves the right to award single or multiple awards and to award all or some funds. Thus, an applicant may receive all, some or no funds.
  - VDSS will post awards online:  
[www.dss.state.va.us](http://www.dss.state.va.us)
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# Agreement

- Agreement includes proposal and
    - Award letter, specifying the funds approved
    - Statement of the Sub-grant Award that specifies key information, and
    - Statement of Award Special Conditions (if applicable)
  - The applicant will need to sign and return the Sub-grant Award document. Any special conditions must all be addressed prior to requesting reimbursement.
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# Payment

- Cost reimbursable basis
- Expenditures submitted pursuant to approved line item budget categories.
- Method of payment electronic, but type will depend on the type of organization receiving funds or serving as fiscal agent
  - ❑ LASER system with LDSS (lead/fiscal agent)
  - ❑ Inter-agency transfer
  - ❑ Invoice (EDI transfer)

# Reporting

- Financial reporting as described in Method of Payment.
- Quarterly reports:
  - Statistical summary,
  - 1-2 page narrative,
  - case study/success story.
  - Barriers to meeting objectives and solutions
  - Outcomes
- Data to LDSS for entry in information system
- 18-Month report

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# Reporting: Monitoring

- Monitored by VDSS staff will occur through
  - Review of required reports,
  - Review of eligible expenditures (prior to disbursement of sub-grant funds),
  - Desk review of programmatic, administrative, and financial procedures and
  - On-site visits.
  - Sub-grant review at 9-month point may result in an adjustment to the funding level or termination of the sub-grant (in conditions statement)
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# PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

- Review of the document

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# Key Dates and Information

- Use TANF Proposal Template on [www.dss.state.va.us](http://www.dss.state.va.us)
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